

Message Text

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ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00
COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OIC-02
ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /122 W
-----028344 171816Z /41

R 171607Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5545
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 05349

USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ICFTU, ILO, PINT
SUBJ: WCL AND WFTU SEEKING MORE SEATS ON ILO GOVERNING
BODY

REFS: (A) BRUSSELS 690 (NOTAL); (B) BRUSSELS 789 (NOTAL)

1. THE COMMUNIST WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (WFTU)
AND THE CATHOLIC-ROOTED WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR
(WCL) ARE WORKING ON A STRATEGY TO WHITTLE DOWN THE
STRENGTH OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE
TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU) ON THE ILO GOVERNING BODY AND TO
INCREASE THEIR OWN REPRESENTATION. NEITHER THE WCL NOR
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THE WFTU HAVE MADE ANY SECRET OF THEIR FEELING THAT THE
WORKERS' GROUP OF THE ILO GOVERNING BODY IS "UNREPRE-
SENTATIVE," AND THEY HAVE PUBLICLY REFERRED TO JOINT
DISCUSSIONS ON THE ILO ("VERY FRUITFUL," THE WFTU
HAS CALLED THEM), BUT THEY HAVE NOT YET PUBLICIZED THEIR
SPECIFIC GOALS.
2. SOME INSIGHTS INTO WFTU AND WCL PLANS--AND HOW THEY

CONVERGE--ARE PROVIDED BY A DECEMBER 12 WFTU CIRCULAR LETTER TO ITS AFFILIATES AND A FEBRUARY 17 WCL CIRCULAR LETTER TO ITS AFFILIATES AND ASSOCIATED ORGANIZATIONS. BOTH THE WCL AND THE WFTU HAVE SENT COPIES OF THESE LETTERS TO THE ICFTU SECRETARIAT. AN ICFTU SOURCE ON MARCH 16 PROVIDED THE MISSION LABOR ATTACHE WITH PHOTOCOPIES OF THE LETTERS ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS.

3. BOTH THE WCL AND THE WFTU ARE LOOKING AHEAD TO THE TRIANNUAL ELECTION OF THE ILO GOVERNING BODY, WHICH OCCURS IN JUNE THIS YEAR, AND BOTH LETTERS ARGUE THAT THE TIME HAS COME TO ACHIEVE A "BETTER BALANCE" IN THE WORKERS' GROUP OF THE TRIPARTITE GOVERNING BODY. THE WFTU LETTER SAYS SPECIFICALLY THAT THE "AUTOMATIC MAJORITY" EXERCISED BY THE ICFTU IS "HENCEFORTH INTOLERABLE," AND THAT "MANY UNION ORGANIZATIONS ARE ARRIVING AT THE SAME CONCLUSION."

4. THE WFTU LETTER, SIGNED BY GENERAL SECRETARY PIERRE GENSOUS, SETS A LIMITED GOAL. AT PRESENT, OUT OF 14 TITULAR SEATS FOR WORKERS ON THE GOVERNING BODY, THE WFTU HAS ONLY ONE REPRESENTATIVE, PYOTRY T. PIMENOV OF THE USSR, AND AMONG 14 DEPUTY SEATS FOR WORKERS, THE WFTU ALSO HAS ONLY ONE PERSON, CORNELIA FILLPACH OF ROUMANIA. THE WFTU LETTER ASKS SUPPORT FOR THEIR REELECTION AND FOR THE ELECTION OF TWO OTHERS, JOZSEF TIMMEN OF HUNGARY AS A TITULAR MEMBER AND JESUS ESCANDELL OF CUBA AS A DEPUTY MEMBER. THUS, AT LEAST IN THIS LETTER, THE WFTU LIMITS ITSELF TO ASKING FOR INCREASED MEMBERSHIP ONLY FOR

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ITS OWN ORGANIZATION.

5. THE WCL LETTER, SIGNED BY ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY GERARD FONTENEAU, IS MORE AMBITIOUS. "FOR US," WRITES FONTENEAU, "IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF OBTAINING ONE OR TWO COMRADES TO REPRESENT US ON THE GOVERNING BODY, BUT RATHER TO CONSTITUTE AT THE ILO A 'WORKER'S GROUP' TRULY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRESENT REALITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR MOVEMENT." FONTENEAU THEN CARVES UP THE WORLD OF LABOR INTO SIX GROUPS, AND DESIGNATES THE ORGANIZATIONS WHICH HE THINKS SHOULD REPRESENT THOSE GROUPS.

6. THE SIX GROUPS ARE THE "INDUSTRIALIZED CAPITALIST WORLD," THE "SOCIALIST COUNTRIES," AND FOUR REGIONAL GROUPINGS: LATIN AMERICA, AFRICA, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND ASIA. THE WCL'S PROPOSED ALLOCATION OF SEATS FOR THE 14 TITULAR MEMBERS OF WORKERS' GROUP:

A. FOR THE "SOCIALIST COUNTRIES," TWO SEATS FROM THE WFTU (WHICH HAS ONE SEAT AT PRESENT).

B. FOR THE "INDUSTRIALIZED CAPITALIST WORLD," FOUR SEATS: THREE FROM THE ICFTU, ONE FROM SOHYO IN JAPAN (SOHYO HAS ONE SEAT AT PRESENT, THE ICFTU NOW HAS FIVE, THREE IN WESTERN EUROPE, ONE EACH IN CANADA AND AUSTRALIA).

C. FOR LATIN AMERICA, ONE FOR THE ICFTU (WHICH NOW HAS TWO) AND ONE FOR THE WCL (WHICH NOW HAS NONE RPT NONE).
D. FOR AFRICA, TWO FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN TRADE UNION UNITY (AT PRESENT ONE IS PRO-ICFTU, THE OTHER PRO-WCL).
E. FOR THE MIDDLE EAST, TWO FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF ARAB TRADE UNIONS (AT PRESENT THE ARAB WORLD HAS ONE SEAT, HELD BY AN ICFTU TUNISIAN).
F. FOR ASIA (OUTSIDE JAPAN AND AUSTRALIA), TWO SEATS, ONE FOR ICFTU (WHICH NOW HAS ONE, HELD BY AN INDIAN), AND ONE FOR THE WCL (WHICH HAS NONE RPT NONE AT PRESENT).
7. THE LETTER THEN GOES ON TO DESIGNATE THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT SHOULD GET NOT ONLY THE DEPUTY SEATS BUT

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"SUBSTITUTE" SEATS AS WELL. IN A DEPARTURE FROM THE WFTU REQUEST, THE WCL PROPOSES THE CONTINUATION OF ONLY ONE WFTU DEPUTY SEAT, BUT ALLOCATES A SECOND ONE FROM THE COMMUNIST WORLD TO AN "AUTONOMOUS" ORGANIZATION (MEANING PROBABLY THE YUGOSLAV LABOR CENTER). IN RETURN, THE WCL OFFERS THE WFTU A DEPUTY SEAT IN LATIN AMERICA, WHERE IT HAS NONE RPT NONE AT PRESENT. (COPIES OF THE WFTU AND WCL LETTERS BEING POUCHED TO THE DEPARTMENT: S/IL:GOOD).

8. THE ICFTU HAS NOT SENT OUT A CIRCULAR LETTER OF ITS OWN ON THE ILO ELECTIONS, BUT HAS CONSULTED SOME AFFILIATES INFORMALLY ON THE SUBJECT, AND WILL PURSUE FURTHER DISCUSSIONS AT THE ICFTU BOARD MEETING IN HAMBURG IN MID-MAY. MORRIS

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